

Single Status Action News #1



Council Meeting Lobby Tuesday 4 December

1.00 - 2.00pm Outside Council House

Please gather at the back of the council house, by the Gas Hall

Clear your diaries for this critical Lobby of the full council meeting. Show the councillors how much we oppose the New Contracts.

Lobby Shows Strong Feelings

Council staff from city centre offices poured into Victoria Square at lunchtime on Tuesday 7th November to lobby the full council meeting. The Lobby was hastily organised by the Council trade unions in response to requests from members to make their feelings known publicly as the full story of the 'employment package' started to emerge late the previous week.

2000 plus members applauded speeches from local union leaders and left the councillors in no doubt about their anger over the new contracts.

Just Say No to the New Contract

Whether you are currently a 'winner', 'loser' or staying the same, all the trade unions are united in urging you to SAY NO to the contract. Remember the new contract :

- **Introduces performance related pay, with annual assessments in which your pay can go down as well as up.**
- Allows the council to make you work any 5 days out of 7
- **Brings in flexibility to make you work anywhere, anytime and in any job at your new grade**
- Fails to deliver equal pay, and short-changes carers, cooks and other female staff groups.
- **Worsens pay and conditions for thousands of staff.**

Even if you have missed the 30 November deadline, you should still send in your rejection form with the UNISON model letter. Management say they have received thousands already.

When you say No to the new contract, the council will write to you giving 3 months notice of its imposing the contract on you. But you will not have agreed to it and can still challenge it. Your continuity of service will not be affected.

Industrial Action Ballot

All the council unions are now making preparations for a ballot on industrial action to force the council to negotiate properly with your unions. We are currently expecting the ballot process to start in mid December.

Council Chamber Meetings Packed Out.

All seats were taken in four joint union members meetings in the Chamber on 20, 22, 27 and 29 November. More than 500 people packed out each meeting, and filled the over-spill meetings in Rooms 3 & 4. Hundreds were regrettably turned away as the meetings were full. The mood was highly supportive of the unions' JUST SAY NO campaign and gave strong support to calls for an industrial action ballot, should the council continue to refuse to negotiate further.

More joint union meetings are being arranged to meet the unprecedented demand.

Appeals – Please Wait for 6 Week Period

The period for lodging appeals does not start until six weeks after your contract letter was received. Then there will be a 10 week period during which you can lodge your appeal. This will cover the whole of January and February for those who received their contracts around 10 November, when the letters first went out.

So please wait until the end of December before trying to submit your appeal. We need this time to encourage more members to JUST SAY NO and to start our industrial action ballot.

There will be plenty of time in January and February during which appeals can be lodged.

Appeals – UNISON Spreadsheet Offers Help

Send us your email address and we will send you a simple to use spreadsheet to help with constructing your appeal. The Excel spreadsheet contains the definitions for every level of every factor. You can insert what you think the right level should be and the spreadsheet will show you the new definition you must give evidence that you meet. The spreadsheet also calculates the extra points you will gain.

400 New Members Join Branch

At the November 28th branch committee, 400 new members were welcomed into the branch. That's our best ever monthly total. There's still plenty more people out there who really should be in UNISON. Please encourage all your work colleagues to join us. There is strength in numbers.

Membership forms available from the branch office, or UNISON Direct 0845 355 0845.

The Last Word ...

... will be yours in each Action News. Send your comments to the branch by post or email.

“ I am not losing any pay so far but I want all members to know that I reject the employment package and contract which makes losers of us all and that I will be voting in favour of action “ T. C.

“I was in a state of shock for days and still feel very ill with the anxiety of being told my salary is being reduced by 36% and I am not valued as a skilled and experienced employee “ S. M.

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